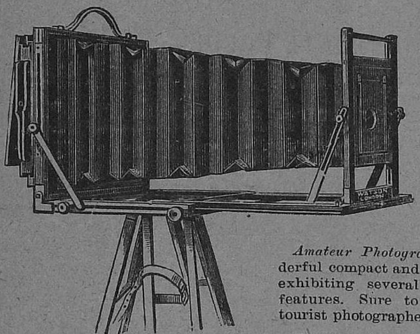
Journal of the Amateur Photographic Society of Madras.

Vol. 3.—No. 8. Price As. 8.

July, 1897.

HIGHEST CLASS PHOTOGRAPHIC INSTRUMENTS.

WATSON'S ACME TOURIST'S CAMERAS & RECTILINEAR LENSES.



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Camera and three double slides	9 12 0	10 0 0	12 5 0	14 0 0	16 12 6	21 0 0
Rapid Rectilinear Lens with Iris diaphragm	4 0 0	4 10 0	5 0 0	6 15 0	8 15 0	11 10 0
Solid Leather Travelling Case with spring lock ...	1 15 0	1 15 0	2 2 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	3 15 0
Rotating Turntable in base, and Tripod Stand ...	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 10 0	2 15 0	3 3 0
	17 9 0	18 7 0	21 9 0	25 15 0	31 2 6	39 8 0

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½-plate and 7½ x 5	8½ x 6½	10 x 8	12 x 10	15 x 12
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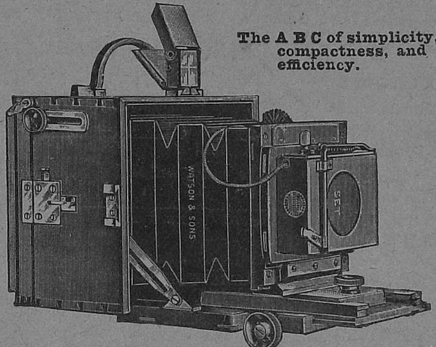

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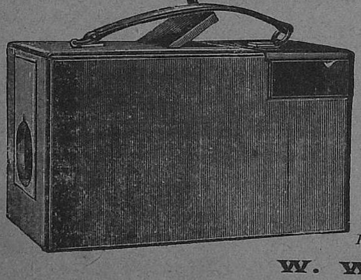

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Pyrogallic acid	... per oz. ...	1	10
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&c. &c. &c.

MADRAS, BANGALORE & OOTACAMUND.

Vol. III. No. 8. **July, 1897.**

Journal of the Amateur Photographic Society of Madras.

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CONTENTS.

	Page
EDITORIAL NOTES—The Swing-Back—The Choice of Lenses—The Glasgow Exhibition—The Total Eclipse of the Sun—Our Illustration ...	85
NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHY AT MAHABLESHWAR ...	87
A NEW PLACE OF MEETING ...	88
PROPOSED EXHIBITION ...	88
"ARS LONGA——"? ...	89
OUR HOME LETTER ...	89
PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY ...	90
NOTES ...	91
EXTRACTS—Choice of Lens—The Swing-Back ...	93
EXHIBITS FOR JUNE ...	95
RULES FOR COMPETITIONS, &c. ...	96

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE subject of the proper use of the swing-back has come up several times recently in the criticisms by our Judges, and so we have thought it well to reprint an article on the subject taken from *The British Journal of Photography*. The subject is an interesting one and deserves a good deal more attention than it usually gets. The swing-back, like many other things, is most useful when used with discretion, but most injurious if not so used. The difficulty referred to in the article arises from what is so often overlooked, the difference between the positions of the eye of the observer and, if we may so speak, the eye of the camera relatively to the picture. A picture taken by a rectilinear lens will be in true perspective if viewed from the same distance as the lens was from the plate. This, of course, is not possible if the picture has been taken with a short focus lens, except by using a lens of the same focal length for viewing the picture. From all other distances the perspective will be more or less defective. This is very clearly seen in pictures showing distant hills. The whole subject was discussed at considerable length in *Nature* some years ago, and the theoretical considerations involved were clearly enunciated. What the photographer has to do is so to manipulate his camera that the defective perspective will have the least possible bad effect, and in most ordinary cases this is got by having the back of the camera vertical. In extreme cases, such as those dealt with in the article, there is no rule which can be laid down—the photographer must use his discretion, and if he has any, this will often mean leaving the view alone.

TO any reader about to buy a lens we would suggest a careful study of the article on the subject which we have extracted from *Photography*. The well-known signature of W. K. B. should give the amateur complete confidence in the trustworthiness of the advice.

194227

THE prospectus of the Glasgow International Photographic Exhibition has come to hand rather too late to be of use for intending exhibitors in India. The Exhibition is to be held in the Royal Glasgow Institute of Fine Arts during September and October; but all exhibits must be delivered at the Fine Arts Institute, 175, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, between the 16th and 21st August, and the application and entrance fees must reach the Secretary not later than August 7th. Some of the rules laid down by the Committee are worth noting. In all the classes any printing process may be employed, and pictures may be of any size. Enlargements may compete in any class, and no distinction will be made between amateurs and professionals.

The following is the list of medals to be awarded :—

1.	Portraits and Groups	1 Gold, 2 Silver, and 4 Bronze Medals.
2.	Landscapes (with or without Figures), Seascapes, and Marine subjects	1 Gold, 2 Silver, and 4 Bronze Medals.
3.	Architecture (exterior and interior).	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
4.	Animal Studies	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
5.	Scientific	2 Silver and 2 Bronze Medals.

Photo-micrography, Radiographs, Astronomical and Meteorological Photographs, and other purely Scientific work.

6.	General Class (Flowers, Still Life, and other subjects not included in other Classes)	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
7.	Instantaneous and Hand Camera....	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
8.	Lantern Slides	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
9.	Stereoscopic Work	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
10.	Enlargements. Section A—Portraits, Groups, and Figure Studies.	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
	Section B—Other subjects.	1 Silver and 1 Bronze Medal.
11.	Genre	1 Gold, 1 Silver, and 1 Bronze Medal.

In Classes 3 to 10 the Judges may award an extra Gold Medal to work of special merit.

There is a special competition open to lady amateurs only, and special sections for photo-mechanical work and apparatus. The Judges are Valentine Blanchard, Esq., H. P. Robinson, Esq., Marshall Wane, Esq., as photographers; Sir Francis Powell, P.R.S.W., and William Young, Esq., R.S.W., as artists; and James Maclehouse, Esq., and W. Blaikie, Esq., as Special Judges for the photo-mechanical section. During the Exhibition there will be frequent lantern entertainments and musical promenades.

THE coming total eclipse of the sun on the 22nd January 1898, is an opportunity which we hope the amateur photographers of Madras will take full advantage of. We intend, in a future number, to give some details of the work that can be done by amateurs, but we mention the subject now because we know that it may require a good deal of previous arrangement for amateurs to get to the line of central eclipse at that time of the year. Most of our readers will have seen from the published Government papers that the Madras Observatory will have a party on the line of central eclipse. The chief instrument to be used by this party will be a photographic lens of 40 ft. focal length, giving an image of the sun nearly 4 inches in diameter. A similar lens was used by a party from the Lick Observatory with great success during the total eclipse of April, 1893. Much smaller instruments, however, will be generally used, and any camera of fairly long focal length judiciously employed will give valuable results.

OUR picture this month is a print on P. O. P. (by Messrs. Del Tufo & Co.) from a negative by Mr. W. A. Willock. The photograph is of Wargrave-on-the-Thames, above Henley. It was taken about an hour before sunset on an August day, through a yellow glass screen.

NOTES ON PHOTOGRAPHY AT MAHABLESHWAR.

Having spent three months at Mahableshwar, during which time I have taken several photographs, I have put together these notes in the hope that they may be of interest to some of your readers.

I do not think these hills are favourable for securing good negatives. I found that the nature of the light rendered it difficult to estimate the correct exposure, and that the error was usually on the side of over-exposure. Landscape photography was out of the question during the hot dry months on account of the valleys being filled with smoke from jungle fires, and haze from the heated country below. The hills around Mahableshwar are covered with dense low jungle, which does not favour photography. There are, however, several "points" from which grand views can be obtained and some characteristic photographs of adjacent precipitous rocks can be taken. Of these, I think Elphinstone Point and Kate's Point are the most beautiful. I took one from Kate's Point which will, I think, prove a good negative. This I stopped down to F/22, giving one sec. exposure.

To Old Mahableshwar is a very pleasant drive of about three miles from Malcolm Peth, the name given to this hill-station. Here is said to be the source of five rivers—Krishna, Koyna, Yenna, Gaitri and Savitri. There is a very old temple at the source of the Krishna; the spot is said to be very sacred—it is also very dirty. The carving at this temple is good. I secured some fair photographs at this spot.

I took an interesting trip to the old Mahratta fort at Pratabgarh, which is noted, historically, as being the scene of the treacherous murder of Afzul Khan, the Mussulman General, by Sivaji, the leader of the Mahrattas, who, during an interview, at the time of embracing him, took the opportunity to disembowel him with a tiger claw. Here I took some interesting photographs of the fort itself and of the temple at the top. I might have done more had it not been that the valleys were filled with smoke and mist. The prettiest picture taken during this excursion was that of the bungalow at Warra, at the foot of the Fitzgerald Ghât road leading to the Koncan. At this bungalow we got a welcome rest before ascending to the fort and after the return. It is very prettily situated, surrounded by picturesque trees, and is structurally more tastefully built than anything in the way of Dâk bungalows that I have seen elsewhere.

The golf links attached to the Phayre Gymkhana Ground have afforded subjects for the camera. The links are very interesting and some are golf curiosities, and full of pitfalls to the golfer. The first link is across a cutting made for the Gymkhana race-course, the next three links are covered with rocks and intersected with nullahs, with jungle at the side. The fifth link is a real curiosity. The teeing ground is at the top of a rather precipitous hill, faced with rocks, at the foot of which is a native burial-ground, over which the ball must be driven, as no play is allowed in the graveyard. The sixth and seventh links need no special mention. They are both a bit trappy, needing straight driving. The eighth link is the downfall of very many. From the teeing ground, the ball has to be driven direct up a high bank faced with rocks, with jungle on each side. The last link is very trappy. Here many an experienced player has spoiled a good round, and it is a constant source of grief to the inexperienced. The first, fifth, and eighth links have been photographed by me, and I have, in addition, taken a fairly good general view of the golf ground.

I was invited to take a photograph of the interior of the church, showing the decorations for the Easter services. The result was said to

be very satisfactory, but I think it would have been better had I given a more prolonged exposure. The last photograph I have taken is, I think, a very characteristic one. As is well known, Mahableshwar is noted for its excessive rainfall, which averages over 300 inches a year. Last year as much as 402 inches were registered. When it is remembered that nearly all this falls during the months of June, July, and August, the deluge that takes place at this time can readily be imagined. The wash to the houses from this torrent of rain is disastrous, and in order to protect them from its effects, at the commencement of the rains, they are encased in grass chuppers, which gives them a very quaint appearance. As this encasing has now been commenced, I have been able to get a photograph of one house thus protected.

In my photography I have had difficulties to contend with, such as the extemporised dark room without convenient fixings, and a scarcity of water, and I have felt the want of assistance. But it has always added to the pleasure of any expedition and if I have not succeeded in obtaining any photographs of Exhibition merit, I have succeeded in affording myself a good deal of amusement, and I have added photographs of interest to my collection.

W. S. A.

A NEW PLACE OF MEETING.

A member of the Society writes as follows: —The Masonic Lodge in the Mount Road have for many years past been good enough to allow the Society to meet in their rooms without making any charge whatever for the accommodation, the only cost to the Society being for the kerosine oil used in lighting the premises on the nights of meeting.

This loan of their premises has been the very greatest convenience to the Society, and has been the means of saving them the expenditure of many hundreds or even thousands of rupees, but the want of suitable accommodation and provision for practical demonstrations has always been felt as a very great drawback, and is, in all probability, the reason why the greater number of our members fight shy of offering to show any particular process in which they may be specially qualified. Whenever any member has been persuaded to give a demonstration, it has always been necessary for him to bring with him all dishes, measures, chemical solutions, dark-room lantern and other necessary apparatus, and, after the labour of going through certain processes, it has always fallen to his lot to have to wash up and re-pack all the things and take them away with him.

It is therefore felt that the time has now arrived when the members of the Society should make up their minds to procure suitable premises for their own occupation, and have them fitted with a decent dark-room and meeting-room, the dark-room being supplied with dishes, measures, &c., of the usual sizes, with Municipal water laid on inside.

The meeting-room can be used as a Club and reading-room, and the photographic papers, which arrive in numbers every week and which are at present only seen by the Secretary and Editors, can then be laid on the table, and be always available for other members who wish to see them, but who are precluded from doing so by present arrangements.

It is therefore suggested that the Committee be authorised to make preparations for renting such premises as are described above with effect from the 1st January, 1898; and the matter will be brought up at the next meeting for discussion.

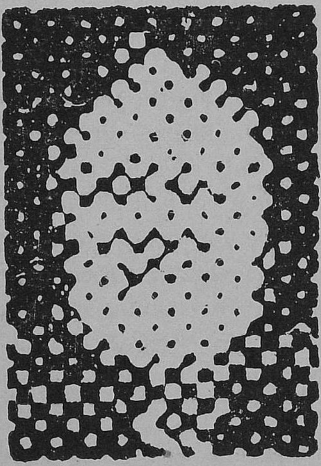
PROPOSED EXHIBITION.

It has been proposed to hold an Exhibition of photographs during the next cold season in Madras, and as there is not sufficient time to do as we did in 1893, and invite the co-operation of

photographers from all parts of the world, it is considered advisable to limit the entries to amateur photographers in the East only, say, India, China, Ceylon, and the Straits Settlements, India including Burma, of course.

It is proposed to bring this matter up for discussion at the next meeting on the 6th August, and it is hoped that there will be a good number of our members present ready to assist with advice and suggestions. It is proposed to appoint a small Committee specially for the Exhibition, so that it shall not interfere in any way with the ordinary working of the Society. Those who are unable to attend will perhaps be good enough to write their ideas and suggestions to the present Honorary Secretary, stating also whether they will undertake to send in a few specimens of their own work.

"ARS LONGA————"?



Photography is oft' enticed
To serve in many ways
Where dignity is sacrificed
To tawdry Art that pays.

The sketch above may make you start,
Yet gaze on it awhile:
A specimen of "process" art
That really is too vile.

At first the object here portrayed
No meaning seems to bear—
A pattern nebulous, and made
Of circle, dot and square.

But held some dozen feet away,
And viewed with blinking eyne,
'Tis possible at last you may
Its relevance divine:—

Facsimile from *Black and White*, *
(Enlarged that all may see)—
LORD KELVIN, as he sat bedight
For his own Jubilee!

Observe the lock of silver hair,
The snowy beard as well;
Each feature, with a little care,
You finally may tell.

But is it meet that such as he
Appear in such a guise?
Or that photography should be
Degraded in this wise?

And is this all that Art can do
For one whose span of life
Embraces fifty years or so
Of scientific strife,

With matter in recondite form,
With ether and with force,
Whose compass carries through the storm
The sailor on his course?

Whose skill and intellectual worth
The electric powers did yoke
To put a girdle round the earth
That Ariel's record broke?

If this is all—we must desire,
For process art now rife,
Short shrift, and may it soon expire.
For Kelvin, longer life!

C. S. M.

* Of 1st July, 1896, also *The Sketch* of 27th June, 1896

OUR HOME LETTER.

June 4th, 1897.

When a man rises above the merely mechanical view of photography, and begins to regard pictures produced by it in the light of works of art, he is

quite likely to become embarrassed and to flounder about among the rocks of doubt as to what really is Art in photography, and what is not; because if he takes the opinions of critics, or of acquaintances who pretend to hold that position, or indeed of photographers themselves, he will find a great variety of opinions of a conflicting nature. It is said, indeed, that, as a class, photographic artists are deeply conscious of each others individual failings. There is not a tittle of doubt that the manner in which they privately pity each other, and give vent to reflections and comment on individual failings, will thoroughly puzzle any common friend to whom their confidences may be revealed, so that, unless he is fortified, he is not unlikely to be precipitated into a morass of doubt from whence extrication would be a matter of no small difficulty. What is a man to think when A says of B that "he is a good fellow, you know, courteous and entertaining and all that, but no artist. Why, look at that thing he did of an evening landscape with a morning sky! Quite absurd—as if anyone could not see the blunder," when all the time you admire the picture referred to very much, and thought sky and landscape beautiful and harmonious. Equally puzzling is the opinion which B has formed of A:—"Really, my dear Sir, he is a faddy, decent fellow, no doubt, but an out-and-out faddy. Pictures of affectation and style, but without contrast and truthless. Where are the high lights?"

The opinion of B on C again may put matters in a very different light:—"Good old soul, he is mad. Who ever saw trees in that position before, and where has the foreground gone? My dear Sir, that is not Art, as remote from Art as Boticelli from bill-sticking! I tell you his work has been overrated by friendly critics."

Now, if that is the position of things, and those are the divers statements which the would-be progressive photographer has to listen to, is it not more than probable he will despair of firm ground whereupon he may drop anchor? Undoubtedly it is, and his salvation can only be found in remembering that all criticism of Art must be partial, worked more or less by the feelings of the persons judging, and that all these arbitrary views must each be interpreted with considerable latitude, making full allowance for the temperament and education of the individual who gives expression to them. The probability is that A, B and C are each capable of producing a picture of merit, faulty, no doubt, as all pictures are, even masterpieces, but in spite of their faults embodying an attempt to express natural things poetically, to interpret the real in a manner akin to the ideal.

You will think this letter rather prosy and preachy, and will want to know, perhaps, when I am coming to the news of the day. Well, there is no news of importance. Colour photography is again dormant, and though the summer has eclipsed for the time being the exhibitions of anamatography, its votaries are accumulating those long film negatives with hundreds of impressions for next lantern season.

I will conclude by giving you a metol developer which will keep almost indefinitely in solution. Make up the solutions as follows:—

A.

Water	16 ounces
Metol	48 grains

When dissolved, add

Sodium sulphite	192 grains

and shake until dissolved. Finally, add half an ounce of fresh sulphurous acid.

B.

Carbonate of potash ...	1 ounce
Water	3 ounces

For use with lantern slides or bromide paper, take one ounce of A, thirty drops of B, and half an ounce of water. This will develop a dozen lantern plates in succession. For use with negatives, the proportions of A and B may be increased without increasing the amount of water. It produces remarkably clear slides, perfectly free from fog.

MATTHEW SURFACE.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOCIETY.

Monthly Meeting held at the Masonic Hall, Mount Road,

Friday, 2nd July, 1897.

Mr. C. Michie-Smith, *President, in the chair.*

PICTURES FOR THE MONTH.

Pictures of "Clouds" were shown by Mrs. McNair, Surgeon-Major-General C. Sibthorpe, C.B., the President (who showed both negatives and prints), and Mr. Dunsterville.

The President also showed a set of three yellow glasses, specially prepared for cloud photography. With such screens, even with ordinary plates, and still better with orthochromatic plates, it is possible to photograph the finest details of clouds, since the blue of the sky is very much weakened and allows the white clouds to produce their full effect. The same glasses may also be used with good effect on landscapes, especially when these include distant hills.

The Honorary Secretary showed a few photographs, the very first attempts of a novice whose knowledge of photography had been gained by the perusal of one book on the subject: the pictures were considered wonderfully good, and such as would do credit to an amateur of many years' experience.

The Honorary Secretary then gave a small demonstration of how to develop platinotype prints which had been over-printed very considerably—the proportions of ingredients were 2 drams of oxalate of potash (saturated solution) with 5 ounces of water. The resulting prints were satisfactory in every way.

Mr. Dunsterville then expressed his regret that he found it impossible to continue the Honorary Secretaryship. He explained that he did not wish to put the Society to the inconvenience that might result if he threw up the post at once without notice, and that he therefore would continue to hold it until the next meeting, on Friday, 6th August, by which time, he trusted, the Committee would succeed in finding a successor. Mr. Dunsterville further explained that he would probably be leaving Madras for a short time on or before the day of the next meeting.

The President intimated that he had received a letter from Surgeon-Major VanGeyzel stating that, as he had not got his leave till later than he had expected, he would be unable to edit the August number of the journal. He also gave notice of his resignation of the Editorship from the end of the current volume, and requested that a new Editor might be appointed. Messrs. Oakes and Michie-Smith agreed to continue the work for another month, but the appointment of a permanent Editor for the next volume was left over till next meeting.

Next Meeting.

The picture subject for the 6th August is "A Tamarind Tree," and for the 3rd September "An Avenue."

194227

NOTES.

Sand Vignetting.—In the May number of *Cycle and Camera* a simple and very convenient method of vignetting prints by the use of sand is described. All that is necessary is to make a shallow wooden box with a glass bottom, having a rim below it to fit loosely over printing frame. Placing it on the frame, a quantity of fine sand is poured in sufficient to cover the bottom to opaqueness. With the finger an oval is formed of the required shape and size and a tap or two given to the box to equalise the sand. To examine the print the box is lifted off bodily—any size or shape of opening can be made. A piece of ground glass between the box and the printing frame or on the top of the box tends to diffuse the light and produce a softer edge to the vignette.

Collodion Dry Plates.—A Company has been formed in Birmingham to manufacture plates after the patents of Dr. Hill Norris. The new "Gazelle" plates are said to possess all the attractive qualities of collodion and gelatine, *viz.*, extreme cleanliness, absence of grain, freedom from fog and giving considerable control to the worker, and the prices are popular.

A Universal Lens.—Dallmeyer has introduced a new lens, the F/6 stigmatic, which, if all that is said about it is true, will prove the long desired universal instrument, equally suitable for every branch of photography, from portraiture to wide-angle work. It is said to be perfectly free from spherical aberration, and with full aperture will cover perfectly a plate the diagonal of which includes 85°.

Ascetylene Gas for Portraiture.—At the ordinary meeting of the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, Mr. Henry J. Rogers, M.I.M.E., A.O.E.E., exhibited his acetylene gas generator and an acetylene lamp for portraiture. He said: "Calcium carbide, the material from which the gas is produced, is a hard, greyish, stone-like material, and it is made by exposing a mixture of lime and coke in fine powder to the intense heat of an electric furnace, under the influence of which the calcium of the lime and the coke or other form of carbon combine chemically with each other, and the molten residue consists of calcium carbide. This is removed from the furnace, and, when cooled and solidified, is broken up into lumps of a convenient size for use. On placing the

carbide in water, acetylene gas is immediately given off, and this is brought about by a decomposition both of the water and of the carbide of calcium, the hydrogen of the water combining with the carbon to form acetylene, and the oxygen of the water combining with the calcium to produce ordinary lime, which is left as a residue in the generating vessel. A great deal too much has been made of the danger of acetylene gas. All the accidents that have occurred up to the present time, within my knowledge, have resulted from the storage of the gas at a very high pressure—as much as 50 or 60 atmospheres; but when it is generated in a small apparatus, the pressure being equal to only about two inches of water column, there is no danger whatever. When copper is used for the fittings an explosive gas is formed, from which danger might arise; but there is no necessity to use copper, as iron or brass are quite suitable for the purpose, and their employment is free from risk. The parabolic reflector of the lamp is made to swing in any direction, so that the focus point may be varied at will, and it is lined inside with asbestos and sewn with copper wire, and the flame can therefore have no injurious effect upon the reflector, which can be whitewashed if it becomes discoloured. The lamp contains nine burners, each of which is capable of consuming from half a foot to one foot of gas per hour, and at the latter rate the light given by the whole is equal to 500 candle power."

Mr. Harold Baker then took a photograph of the President, Mr. Rogers' lamp being utilised as an illuminant.

The Way to Photograph Baby.—Procure six 6 inch wire nails, 6 oz. chloroform, 1 handkerchief. Saturate the handkerchief with the chloroform and press over the nose and mouth of the baby till perfectly quiet. Then drive nails through each ear, hands and feet into a board large enough for background. Use hammer to the parents if necessary.—T. Lee Syms in *Photographic Life*.

Lantern Slides in Prussian Blue.—Coat a number of clean glasses with a 5 per cent. solution of any good gelatine, allow the gelatine to set, the glasses being levelled, and set up to dry in a room free from dust. The sensitizing solution is made as for the cyanotype process:

Citrate of iron and ammonia	... ...	1 part in 8 water.
Ferrocyanide of potassium	... ...	1 „ 8 „

Mix in equal proportions, filter, and soak the gelatined plate for about 5 minutes, and allow to dry. Expose under negative, time required about double that of albumenized paper. The image is fixed by washing until all yellowness has disappeared, it can be cleared by slightly acidulating the water with hydrochloric acid. The mixed solution will not keep very long—Rae, in *The Photographic News*.

Blood-Red Prints.—In the *Revue Suisse*, a method for obtaining red prints with uranium and iron is described by E. Liesegang. The salts of uranium, like those of iron, are sensitive to light. If a paper coated with nitrate or chloride of uranium is treated, after exposure to light, with potassium ferrocyanide, the image obtained is red and not blue, like that given by ferrocyanide. The ferrocyanide only attacks the oxidized portions, *i.e.*, the parts that have been attacked by the light. The red colour produced resembles the ordinary tint of platinum prints toned red. To obtain this result the prints ought to be immersed in the following bath:—

Nitrate of uranium	10 grains
Potassium ferrocyanide	2 grains
Ascetic acid	1 dram
Water	2 ounces

"When Dean Meets Dean!"—In the delightful series of 'Varsity Tales now appearing in the *Windsor Magazine*, Max Pembleton tells the following story of "Red Morgan," the famous Dean of Jesus College:—

"It befell that he found himself in the quad of Christchurch at Oxford, and, being an expert photographer, what should he do but produce his camera and pose it for a picture of a court so famous. Scarce was the tripod set, however, when a porter came running from the lodge and began to expostulate.

'Sir,' said he, 'I beg your pardon, but you are not allowed to take photographs here!'

'Man,' cried the Dean, in a voice of thunder, 'do you know who I am?'

The porter's knees shook. For a moment he imagined that he had become one of the walls of Jericho, and that a blast from heaven smote him.

'N-n-n-no, Sir,' he stammered.

'Then know that I am the Dean of Jesus College, Cambridge, and that I *shall* take photographs here!'

The porter ran for his life. 'Red Morgan,' glaring round the court like a bull which has tossed a banderillo,

resumed his occupation. He was just inserting a plate in his camera when another little man, gowned and dancing with anger, dashed across the court and faced him.

'Sir,' squeaked the little man, with the voice of a hysterical piccolo, 'you must not take photographs in this college!'

'Red Morgan' turned his head.

'Man,' he yelled, 'do you know who I am? Then learn. I am the Dean of Jesus College, Cambridge, and I say that I *shall* take pictures here!'

'Sir,' retorted the little man, while he gave the camera a kick and sent it flying, 'I am the Dean of Christchurch, Oxford, and I say that you *shall not* take pictures here!'"

EXTRACTS.

The Everlasting Question of Choice of Lens.

Happy must have been, if not the photographer, at least the being who, having the misfortune to get the credit of "knowing" about lenses, was asked to advise as to choice in those dim old days when there were only two or three types of photographic objectives to choose from. More and more difficult has his position become, and the last few years has rendered it worse than ever. The advent of the "convertible anastigmatic" type of lens is nearly the last straw.

It was only the other day that we had to go through the mill in connection with this business, and the way of it was somewhat as follows:—

An amateur asked us if we would advise him as to the purchase of a lens for a half-plate camera ($6\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ inches). We assented with a willingness more apparent, we fear, than real, for we somewhat dreaded the ordeal. The camera was produced, and we found it already fitted with a lens of the rapid symmetrical type by a London optician whose name is second to none, the focus of the lens being about $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. The instrument was, in fact, an excellent one for the work it was intended for, and as good as could have been got till the anastigmatic, stigmatic, etc., lenses, the outcome of the new Jena glass, took everything optical by storm. What is the fault with this?" we asked. "With full aperture it does not cover the plate as sharp at the corners as at the centre." This we knew, of course, and tried to explain:—"It was not always necessary or advisable that a lens should do so; it would do so if stopped down," etc., but in vain. He had bought a "half-plate lens," and "it ought to cover the plate to the corners with full aperture." Did we know of any lens that would? With much caution we explained that there were certain lenses of the newer kind which would satisfy the conditions demanded, in so far as, if of suitable focal length, there would bo no *perceptible* falling off of definition, even at the extreme corners of the plate, using full aperture, and a *large* one at that. We mentioned eight to nine inches as a focal length useful for most subjects on a half-plate, and a catalogue of "convertible anastigmats" was consulted. After careful consideration we suggested a "convertible" made up of two single anastigmats, one of $16\frac{1}{2}$, the other of 14 in. focus, the two combined giving a rectilinear anastigmatic of $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. focus working at an aperture of f/7. We pointed out the advantage of having not only one lens, but actually three, all of different focal lengths. Immediately, however, there came the objection—"But this is a whole-plate lens; it is advertised to cover with full aperture a plate $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ in., and what I want is only a half-plate lens." This involves a long explanation with, at the end, the admission that we wish all would take to heart that such terms as "half-plate lens," not to mention "cabinet lens," "carte-de-visite lens," and so forth, are almost entirely without meaning. Then we bungled, and got into deeper waters than ever. Said we sententiously:—"The results of the use of a wide-angle lens are generally the reverse of artistic, but there come times when it is useful to record facts that cannot be otherwise noted by the camera, and were you to procure two single convertible anastigmats of foci $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. and 9 in. respectively, as well as the two already mentioned, you would have a whole battery of lenses, including a rectilinear of $5\frac{3}{4}$ in. focus, which would act as a wide-angle lens."

Rash words. The answer came:—"But one of the very reasons why I am so much inclined to buy a pair of these 'convertible anastigmats' is that it is said of it that it will act as a wide-angle lens if stopped down, so, surely, if I purchase the pair you first recommended I have nothing to do but to stop the combination down, and it will act as a wide-angle lens. I do not see why I need another."

The result of the conversation here briefly indicated has been to incline us to make a set of statements as a guide to the selection of a photographic lens, by no means new, but which we try here to put in a more succinct form than we have seen them put before, or have ourselves in any other place expressed them:—

(1.) Such terms as "cabinet lens," "whole-plate lens," etc., may be taken as meaningless, except in so far as they generally indicate that the lens will illuminate (not necessarily give definition to the corners of) a plate of the size mentioned.

(2.) Size of plate having been decided on, the first factor to be considered in selecting an "all round lens" is the focal length.

(3.) Experience has shown that for the great majority of work, the most suitable focal length is somewhat greater than the diagonal of the plate, say from one and a quarter to one and a half times the length of the plate.

(4.) For portraiture the best focal length is twice the length of the *print* that is to be produced.

(5.) Leaving telephotographic lenses out of the question, any modern photographic objective will illuminate a plate to the corner if of the focal length indicated.

(6.) Other things being equal, the larger the aperture with which a lens will define sharply, the more generally useful is the lens.

(7.) Other things being equal, the more uniform the definition throughout the field, with given aperture, the more *generally* useful is the lens.

(8.) The more equal the illumination throughout the field, the more useful will the lens be for *all* purposes.

(9.) With the diaphragm in the proper place, the single lens gives more equal illumination than any other.

(10.) In compound lenses an approach to uniformity of lighting is favoured by (*a*) proximity of the combinations of the lens, and (*b*) large diameters of the combinations relative to the maximum diaphragm aperture.

(11.) The necessity for, or advantage of, rectilinearity need not be more than mentioned. All modern compound photographic objectives may be said to be practically rectilinear. Even single lenses of the focal lengths mentioned give no perceptible distortion except with the most trying subjects.

(12.) A lens is commonly called "wide-angle" if it will illuminate, and define with large or small stop, a circle of diameter equal to, or greater than the focal length by 1·5.

(13.) Apart from the "diffusion of focus" introduced in some lenses, there is no special "portrait quality" in a lens sold as a "portrait lens." The suitability, or the reverse, of a lens for portraiture is decided mainly by maximum defining aperture, and *focal length relative to the size of picture to be produced.*

(14.) Apart from considerations of "diffusion of focus," it is pure waste of money to purchase a portrait lens unless it is intended to use it with a larger aperture than is available with any of the many modern rectilinear forms of lens. Stopped down to an aperture equivalent to that of such rectilinear lenses, the performance of a portrait lens will be *inferior* to that of the rectilinear.

(15.) Except for small work, say up to portraits eight inches long, apertures greater than those given by many modern forms of rectilinear lens cannot be made use of on account of lack of depth of focus, and the purchase of large "portrait lenses" is therefore generally money thrown away. Lastly—a repetition—*the focal length is the principal factor to be considered.*—By W. K. B. in *Photography.*

The Swing Back.

The swing back has been somewhat prominently to the front on more than one occasion lately, and, as considerable misconception appears to exist in some quarters as to its proper use and function, we make no excuse for once more bringing the subject forward.

In his paper, read at the Camera Club Conference, Professor Allen made some pertinent and really valuable remarks of a thoroughly practical character, and these have been brought forcibly back to our notice by more than one communication we have received during the last few days with regard to the illustration accompanying an advertisement in our own and other pages last week. Professor Allen says :— "It is more than probable that the human eye sees vertical parallel lines of considerable altitude as though they slightly converged. At any rate, if a high tower be taken with a wide-angle lens and swing back quite vertical, it seemed as though it was wider at the top than lower down ; it seemed, in fact, top-heavy and swollen." This is just the point in connexion with the illustrations referred to that our attention has been called to by two or three correspondents, who seem inclined to attribute the effect to the particular camera employed, which we need scarcely say is a thoroughly groundless assumption.

It is, as Mr. Allen says, more than probable "that the eye sees parallel vertical lines as if they were convergent" ; it is a fact that is open to very easy demonstration, and in consequence, when the eye looks upon the representation of such vertical lines in the form of, say, the Tower and Gateway of Christ's College, Cambridge, rendered with strict parallelism, it instinctively feels that something is wrong, and resents it. If our readers will refer to the illustrations in our last week's advertisement pages, they will recognise, if they have not already done so, what we mean, and will feel that Mr. Allen's description of the effect is a most accurate one. Yet, if the lines be gauged carefully, they will be found to be perfectly accurate, in so far, at least, as their perpendicularity and parallelism are concerned, and the apparent "swollenness" is merely an optical illusion.

Many novices in photography, and for that matter many old hands, are under the impression that, if a rectilinear lens be employed, and the plate swung in a truly vertical position, all the requirements of perfect accuracy have been complied with, and such would, no doubt, be the case if the task were merely the copying of a picture ; but, when applied to an architectural subject, such as the gateway above alluded to, although the result may be satisfactory in the light of an architect's elevation, it is inaccurate in perspective and artistically unpleasing. In saying this, we are in no way desirous of under-rating the usefulness of the swing back ; far from it, for the best possible rendering of that same subject, the gateway of Christ's, without either swing back or front, would be hideous in the extreme—in fact, we must confess to having given that particular subject up in despair when on a visit to Cambridge some two years ago. We are reminded of Shakespeare's dictum :— "It is excellent to have a giant's power, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant," and in applying the swing back, as Mr. Allen says, a "compromise, a slight re-adjustment can often be used with advantage."

We are quite aware that there are many who will argue that any departure from the strictly vertical and parallel is wrong ; indeed, some years ago, in the early "seventies," if we remember rightly, the question of the "morality" of the swing back was raised before the parent society—then the London Photographic Society—by, we believe, the late J. R. Sawyer. At any rate, that gentleman championed the slightly converging view, and pointed out the obvious absurdity of representing the Clock Tower of the Houses of Parliament, when viewed from its base, by means of parallel lines. However, the members of the old "London" made the subject lively through two or three meetings, but what was the decision arrived at we do not remember ; probably a number of members "remained of the same opinion still."

Should any doubt exist on the subject of the actual convergence of the lines of such a subject as, say, the Victoria Tower, let a piece of card be held at a convenient distance from the eye, and, with a fine pencil, mark the width of the Tower as it appears to the eye at the line of sight. Now repeat the operation, taking great care to preserve the exact distance between the eye and the card, as high up as the lines retain their parallelism, and compare the two measurements. If the second one is not *considerably* smaller than the first, then we can only say that the retina of that particular observer is fitted with an automatic swing back ; but the matter can be proved mathematically by calculation, or, more simply still, by plotting out the lines upon a sheet of paper, by

which means it is easy to show that the angle subtended by an object of any given dimensions becomes gradually smaller as its elevation increases. The difference is proportionately greater the closer the observer is to the object or the wider the angle of view, and thus it happens that, with wide-angle lenses, and such subjects as the gateway of Christ's College, this appearance of top-heaviness is more generally noticeable; not that the lens itself has anything to do with the matter, except in so far as it permits a nearer approach to the subject; the point of view alone affects the question.

To give an example, let us suppose such an object as the gateway depicted in the advertisement, measuring 60 feet in the height of the two turrets, and 30 feet between their external outlines. If such an object be observed from a distance of 120 feet, which is about the distance at which a medium angle lens would be available with comfort, the width of the two turrets at the top would, by rough calculation, subtend an angle equal to about 26 feet at the base, or nearly 4 feet less; and, if the point of view were decreased to 60 feet, the distance at which a lens of wider angle would be required, the angle subtended would be equal to a width of about 21 feet at the base, or nearly 9 feet less. Although, in photographing such an object from those standpoints, owing to a variety of causes, the differences in measurements would not be so exaggerated, they are still very appreciable, and we have before us as we write a negative specially taken to illustrate the point. It represents a couple of windows of the same width, one above the other, the total height from the ground of the higher one being only 18 feet. The camera was placed 24 feet away, and carefully levelled, the image being got into position by raising the front as high as possible. At that comparatively low elevation there is a difference in measurements, when tested with a pair of dividers of over a sixteenth of an inch, the upper window being, of course, the smaller, although to the eye it has the appearance of being much the wider.

From what we have said, it would be evident to repeat Professor Allen's suggestion, that a compromise or slight re-adjustment may often be desirable, nay, may even be absolutely necessary, and that a departure may be made from strictly vertical lines without committing any very heinous sin—if sin at all. It will be in the judicious use of, or abstention from, the swing back, or equivalent appliances, that the competent and artistic photographer will single himself out from the common herd, who will go on content to observe the golden rule of an invariably vertical focussing glass.

Of course, there are circumstances under which strictly perpendicular lines are almost a necessity, as when such fall near the margin of a picture, more especially in the case of lantern slides. What, for instance, could be more objectionable than a cathedral interior with the pillars visibly falling away from the margin of the slide? But, in such subjects as the one we have put forward as an example, there is no reason, but quite the reverse, why the slight re-adjustment should not be made. We have said that we gave up that subject in despair, not because we could not get swing enough, but simply because, do what we would, it invariably appeared to be wrong somewhere. The gateway of St. John's College forms a similar subject, but admits of free treatment; but, even with that, we could not avoid the "swollen" appearance of the turrets, even though some slight departure from parallelism was indulged in.

Cambridge is rich in architectural test subjects, and probably one of the very finest to be found anywhere is King's College Chapel, either interior or exterior. On the same occasion already referred to, we secured two or three views of the river frontage from various standpoints, but in one of them, taken from the green (the nearest point of view, be it observed), the chapel presents to a slight extent the distorted effect to which we have referred, although in another picture, taken from the meadow on the other side of the river, it is entirely absent.

In another article we shall have something to say on other forms of distortion that have been laid to the charge of the swing back.—*The British Journal of Photography.*

EXHIBITS FOR JUNE.

SUBJECT:—"*A Horse.*"

C. S. M.—An excellent picture, both as regards arrangement and execution. The only fault to be found with it is that the printing is slightly too dark.

Mrs. E. P.—This is, in some respects, a good picture, but, as a whole, is rather disappointing. The horse photographed is of so light a colour that, being in a very bright light, no details appear on the body. The exposure appears to have been too long. A very rapid exposure, with slow development, would have probably produced a better effect. Horses have a bad habit of moving their heads and tails while being photographed and, in most cases, a very quick exposure is required.

Mrs. M'N.—These two pictures are very disappointing as coming from one who does such excellent work. The negatives do not seem to have been sharp enough to stand enlargement, and the printing of both is very poor—partly, no doubt, due to bad paper. Direct prints from the negatives would have been much better.

R. V.—Travancore.—A very good picture, but the horse, being dark, would have stood out better against a lighter background.

154222

COMPETITIONS.

(*Open only to Members of the Society.*)

SUBJECT FOR MONTHLY COMPETITIONS IN { AUGUST—*A Tamarind Tree*
SEPTEMBER.—*An Avenue.*

RULES.

1. *Two Special Competitions shall be held, in each year, in addition to a monthly competition.*

2. *The Committee shall select the subjects for the Special Competitions, and notice of the selected subjects shall be announced in the Society's Journal in February and in July of each year. The subject for each monthly competition shall be selected two months in advance by the members present at the monthly meeting, and shall be notified in the next issue of the Society's Journal.*

3. *Pictures, &c., competing for Prizes at the Special Competitions must reach the Secretary by the last day of January and of May, and those competing at the monthly competitions must arrive in time to be shown at the monthly meeting.*

4. *Prizes will consist of Silver and of Bronze Medals, and of Certificates of Merit.*

5. *Not more than one Silver and one Bronze Medal shall be given at each Special Competition, and one Silver and one Bronze Medal may also be given at these competitions for excellence in copying, enlarging, lantern slides, or any other special branch of photography. One Silver and one Bronze Medal shall be awarded half-yearly to the exhibitors who obtain the highest and the next highest marks respectively at the monthly competitions. The number of Certificates of Merit granted at each competition is left to the discretion of the Judges.*

6. *A member may receive only one Silver and one Bronze Medal in the special, and one Silver and one Bronze Medal in the monthly, competitions, held during the same year; but should a member who has been adjudged a medal be disqualified under this rule from receiving it, he shall be given a Special Certificate instead, marked 1st or 2nd Prize.*

7. *A Special Committee of three members shall be appointed Judges by the General Committee to carry out, subject to these Rules, all arrangements connected with the competitions.*

8. *The Special Committee shall be appointed after the Annual General Meeting in January, and shall hold office for one year, and any vacancy occurring will be filled up by the General Committee.*

9. *The Special Committee shall decide upon the merits of the pictures, &c., sent in for competition, and their decision shall be final. The system of judging the monthly exhibits shall be by awarding marks, a record of which shall be kept by the Judges, the marks being totalled and the results declared half-yearly. For this purpose, only the three highest marks awarded at each competition to each competitor shall be recorded, but not the aggregate marks gained by each for a number of exhibits.*

10. *If any member of the Special Committee is a competitor, the General Committee shall appoint a non-competing member to act as Judge at that competition instead of the competing member.*

11. *No exhibit shall compete twice, but pictures, &c., already exhibited elsewhere, may be sent in for the competitions.*

12. *Lantern slides sent in for competition shall be in sets of six, and shall be judged upon the screen.*

13. *The Special Committee shall not award any Prizes or Certificates, unless they consider the exhibits to be worthy of such distinction.*

14. *Each competing exhibit shall be the entire work of the exhibitor, and when sent in shall be accompanied by a Certificate in the annexed form:—*

> *"The (1) Arranging, (2) Exposing, (3) Developing, (4) Retouching (if any), (5) Printing and (6) Trimming and Mounting were done by me without assistance."*
>
> ______________________
>
> *Member, A. P. Socy. of Madras.*

15. *All pictures for the Special Competitions shall be mounted, and may, at the competitor's option, be framed but not glazed. Those for the monthly competitions need not be mounted, but should be trimmed.*

16. *Each competing picture should have a name or title, which should indicate the nature of the subject.*

17. *No competitor shall be allowed to send in more than six pictures to compete for any particular Prize, but the same member may compete in all branches specified in Rule 5.*

18. *The pictures gaining 1st and 2nd Prizes at the half-yearly competitions, and the best pictures sent for the monthly competitions, shall, when practicable, be reproduced in the Society's Journal.*

19. *To give up-country members an opportunity of seeing the competing pictures at the special competitions, the pictures shall be circulated to all members of the Society, not residing in Madras, who apply to see them. As this arrangement can only be carried out by the cordial co-operation of the members themselves, they are expected to forward the pictures without delay to the next member, and to send one of the accompanying post-cards to the Secretary, so that by this means the progress of the pictures may be traced.*

List of Members whose Dark Rooms are available for use by Members of the Madras Amateur Photographic Society.

J. L. VANGEYZEL, Dare's Gardens, Chetput.
T. P. S. NAGARATNAM, 47, Malayappen Street, Black Town.
E. MAENNIG, Buckingham House, Tranquebar.
J. CHOKANNA, AMILDAR, Bowringpet, Mysore State.

SALE AND EXCHANGE.

FOR SALE.—A half-plate Improved Simplex Camera, with Taylor, Taylor, and Hobson's R. R. lens fitted with iris diaphragm, 3 double-dark slides and focussing cloth, all in waterproof case. The kit is as good as new, having been used only 3 or 4 times. To go with the above.—3 half plate printing frames, 4 dishes, dropping bottles, 3 glass measures, 100 negative envelopes, Ewing's Hand-book, Wilson's Cyclopedia, Bothamley's Manual. Price—Rs. 225. No offers. Apply to Dr. VanGeyzel, Chetput, Madras.

NOTICES.

Members of the Madras Amateur Photographic Society are permitted to use this column free of charge for two insertions of each advertisement—all subsequent insertions of the same being chargeable at 2 annas a line. When an advertisement becomes liable to this charge, it will not be inserted unless a postal order or stamps to the value of the charge are previously sent, addressed to Graves, Cookson and Co., Scottish Press, Mount Road Branch, Madras. Advertisements received up to the 5th of each month will be inserted in the next issue of the Journal; those received after this date will be held over for the subsequent issue.

Subscribers, and others who are not regular dealers may make use of this column for advertisements by paying at the rate of 3 annas a line.

Rates of Subscription, Payable in Advance.

——	India, including Postage.	Europe, including Postage.
Twelve months ...	5 Rupees ...	8s.
Six months ...	3 „ ...	5s.

N.B.—The Journal is issued on the 15th of each month, and is posted free to members of the Madras Amateur Photographic Society.

Entrance Fee, Rs. 5.—Annual Subscription *for Resident Members, Rs. 15; for Up-country Members, Rs. 12. Members joining after 30th June pay Half-year's Subscription.*

Candidates for Election—*should be proposed by one member and seconded by another; and they will be ballotted for at the following meeting.*

Ordinary Meetings—*of the Society are held on the first Friday of each month at 6 p.m. and members are at liberty to introduce visitors.*

Letters to the Editor—*should be addressed care of Messrs. Graves, Cookson & Co., Scottish Press, Mount Road Branch, Madras.*

Letters to the Honorary Secretary—*should be addressed to F. Dunsterville, Esq., Royapuram, Madras.*

Letters to the Honorary Treasurer and Remittances—*should be addressed V. G. Lynn, Esq., care of Messrs. Best & Co., Madras.*

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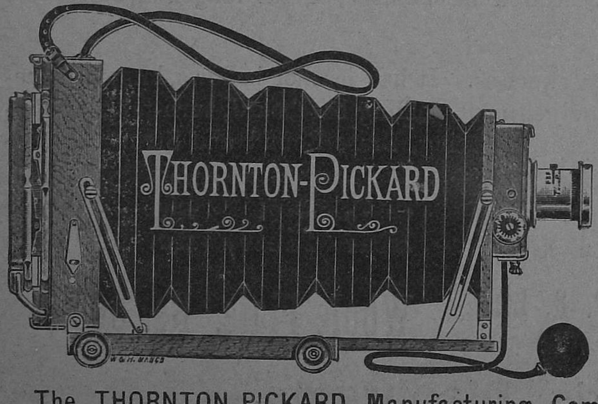

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